

35 Eccles St. Dublin th 29 May 1861

To Wm Lloyd Garrison Esq

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My dear friend.

The wonderful changes which have taken place in your country in the public sentiment of the people, within the past six months, & the rapidity with which one unexpected event follows on another, among you, have awakened ^{here} a universal feeling of interest in your proceedings, & I may add, of deep regret in many a heart, because of the present posture of your affairs. For my own part, I may say, that when the news arrived, that something like a real determination on the part of some of your Southern States to secede from the unnatural coalition, — I do not call it union, for no real union ever existed between your free & your slave States, but a chain, which had long bound you together, like two quarling dogs yoked against their will, — reached us, I rejoiced sincerely, for I felt that the day of redemption of the slave, was then nigh at hand. I saw, in that circumstance, the realization of that event ^{so long demanded} by your section of the American abolitionists, "No union with slaveholders."

It is true, the cry of secession came from an unexpected

quarter; from the South, instead of the North; but no
matter, I rejoiced at the near fulfilment of our aspirations;
& I said, the North will surely permit this secession to go on
in peace, for, where no real ^{union} ever did, or ever can, exist, to
fight for an idea, will surely never enter into the heads of
Northern men, particularly of Northern Abolitionists. But
events during the past few weeks, have falsified my anticipa-
tions. I find the North is mad for this impracticable idea, &
that my cherished friends among the only party I ever believed
to be really friendly to the coloured man, are among the foremost
in "crying havoc, & ~~letting slip~~ ^{let slip} the dogs of war." "The Liberator"
& "The Standard," seem to me to have forgotten the axiom, —
made doubly true by the experience of mankind for long ages,
in every land, savage & civilized, — "They who take the sword will
perish by the sword." Many a time within the last 25 years
of my life, during which I have striven to persuade others, that
~~war~~ was always a folly as well as a crime, have my
small labours in the cause of peace been arrested by the unwelcome
thought, that it was useless to go on striving to persuade men
not to learn war any more, but to endeavour by some other
means, — Christian means, I have hoped against hope, would yet
find their way into our hearts, — to promote the end of civilization.
This painful feeling has come more frequently before my mind,
since I have found that you, & Wendell Phillips, & the

Editors of the Standard, have lost your faith in the superior
efficacy of peace over war, to rectify the evils even of slavery.

It does not appear to me that your Northern men in
their seeming determination to coerce the South to keep
the Union intact, are influenced by any feelings of kindness
towards the slave. The energy which actuates the whole North
at present, appears to me to arise from no such worthy motive,
I am very apprehensive, that she would be slow to act as
she is now doing, if she believed the emancipation of the
Southern slaves, would be the result. I have looked to the
realization of that desirable object, from the expectation that the
South, when left to the management of her own affairs, would
soon find it impossible to hold four millions of her population
in bondage; that either the sense of insecurity under such
circumstances, would induce the masters spontaneously to
free their slaves, who would be found continually escaping
in large numbers, into the free states, or that the slaves,
sustained by the public opinion of the world, & perhaps aided
by no inconsiderable number of the Southern white popula-
tion, would rise up, & free themselves by force.

I believe the true policy of the North is, to allow each
of the Southern States as please to do so, to secede quietly,
to follow the example of England in getting rid of all
protective tariffs, & by throwing open her trade to all

the world, go forward in a career of continued prosperity & happiness. War will assuredly blast these pleasant prospects, perhaps for a long season. Fierce passions will fill the breasts of your population at either side, hatred will abound, where love should predominate. I have just this moment read a letter from the Special Correspondent of the London Times, from South Carolina, which reveals a state of such diabolical hatred towards Northern men, in the bosoms of Southern slaveholders, as makes the blood shudder in ones veins, to read the account of it. War, under such circumstances, means extermination, or a fierce & horrible encounter of long duration, to end in planting feelings of mutual hatred, not to be removed for many coming generations. I send you the Dublin Paper of this date, which contains the letter above referred to. If you allow the South quietly to secede, you will get rid of all complicity with her slave system, which is daily doing her more & more damage in the eyes of the whole world; & if it be proved that her move is a false one for mutual happiness, — which I believe would soon be apparent, — a re-union on a happier basis could be established. To fight for it now will be madness, & I do

not meet with a man of any party here, who is not
of this opinion. Indeed I do not yet believe you will
come to serious blows on the occasion. My great fear
is, that some hollow compromise will be made, in
which the interests of the coloured population will be no
question with either party. My hope however is, that
the fiery spirits of the South will be allowed to retire,
& that thus, your cry of 20 years standing, will be
realized - "No union with slaveholders."

I am sorry to find any inclination
on your part, to give the smallest sanction to war for
accomplishment of the slave's freedom; for two reasons, -
the first is, that I believe violence begets violence, & that
freedom is never the result; & the second is, that your
surrender of conviction to apparent expediency, weakens
my own hopes that the principles enunciated by Jesus
will yet rule in the hearts of civilized men.

What is our friend A. C. Wright doing in this
crisis? I had thoughts of addressing him a few lines
through "The Liberator", but this letter will suffice.

Yours, my dear friend affectionately
James O'Connell

James Haughton,
May, 1861

DUBLIN
5E
MY 29
1861

Mr Lloyd Garrison Esq
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